

# **Generativity and Rural Teacher Identity in a Mapuche Community of Toltén (Chile): An Exploratory Study**

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*This article aims to develop an insight, from a narrative-generative perspective, into the knowledge that characterizes rural teaching professionalism and its potentially generative implications in a Mapuche community. Method: an exploratory-descriptive and cross-sectional qualitative research was carried out. The participants were 4 educators working in intercultural schools in the commune of Toltén (Chile), with an average age of 50 years and belonging to the Mapuche ethnic group. For data collection, in-depth interviews were used. Subsequently, the collected data was interpreted through content analysis. Results: The Mapuche epistemology that guides the professional work of the participants in intercultural educational contexts is described. The participants generatively promote the Mapuche sense of belonging in the students through play, positive affect, and critical reflection, integrating local knowledge and ancestral authorities in the rural teaching and learning processes.*

*Keywords: pedagogy, generativity, Mapuche culture, rural school, interculturality*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Chilean school system has been characterized by harboring different identities and manifestations of cultural diversity (Stang-Alva et al., 2021; Oyarzún et al., 2022), although this has not necessarily meant a positive recognition and valuation of this plurality (Gutiérrez-Saldivia and Rivera, 2020). Proof of this is that educational policies have not been characterized by recognizing the particularity of the territories and their actors, a fact that, among other factors, has implied the cultural impoverishment of the identities with lesser quotas of power (Turra and Ferrada, 2016), as well as the total or partial exclusion of their knowledge and wisdom from the school curriculum (Aravena, 2017).

In reference to teachers, although the role of teachers has been recognized as a fundamental role played to achieve a positive and equitable management of diversity in the classroom, initiatives in this area remain incipient and culturally irrelevant (Ibañez-Salgado and Druker-Ibañez, 2018). In fact, a significant volume of Chilean universities does not consider or incorporate specific training on interculturality during initial teacher training (Carter-Thuillier et al., 2022), and, as a result, future teachers are not prepared for the needs, challenges and obstacles they are likely to experience in this area during their professional career (Castillo, 2021). This scenario is especially counterproductive in contexts that are densely inhabited by multiple cultural identities such as the southern macro-zone of Chile, a territory historically linked to the presence of the Mapuche people (Carter-Thuillier et al., 2022) and where the challenge of implementing intercultural educational projects is usually intersected with the complexities of rurality (Silva-Peña et al., 2013).

The above described entails that, in many cases, teachers must face from their inexperience and scarce training on interculturality and rurality, the challenge of self-managing and defining pedagogical actions that make possible: working with several grades in the same space, (co)building social involvement in the communities (Fuentes, 2019), developing their generative responsibility, transcending the hegemonic logics of cultural and social reproduction that weaken local identities, favoring the decolonization and transcendence of Mapuche knowledge, customs and culture in general.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand, from a narrative-generative perspective, the knowledge that characterizes the rural teaching professionalism of educators working in the commune of Toltén (Chile) and its potentially generative implications in the Mapuche communities in which they exercise their educational work. This context is self-identified in territorial and identity terms as Mapuche Lafkenche or “people of the sea” due to their ancestral, spiritual and economic relationship with the sea or Lafken.

## **THEORETICAL - CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Generativity and Its Socio-Educational Implications**

Some professions inherently have a demand for care and responsibility towards others (particularly the younger generations), as is the case of pedagogy, (Sandoval-Obando, 2021b); where it is of great significance to approach the concept of generativity (Sandoval-Obando, 2020; Zacarés & Serra, 2011). This concept developed by Erikson (2000) describes a stage of human development in which people have the capacity to transmit to other generations something to ensure their well-being in the future (Villar et al., 2013; Sandoval-Obando & Calvo Muñoz, 2022a; Sandoval-Obando et al., 2022).

Generativity has been classified into four types (Kotre, 1996): biological, parental, technical and cultural generativity; each of them can be presented with two forms of expression: *communal*: which refers to the impulse to care for the other so that he/she survives and transcends; or *genetic*: referring to teaching or caring for the other with the objective of persevering a particular characteristic (Zacarés & Serra, 2011). Generativity can be expressed in the training of young people, social commitment, and civic and political participation (Sandoval-Obando & Zacarés, 2020; Sandoval-Obando et al., 2021); as well as the interest that adults have in transmitting elements, ideas, values, instruments or beliefs of a culture to future generations (Kotre, 2004).

The previously mentioned types of generativity may have subtypes or variants, being of interest the “indigenous cultural generativity”, named by Lewis & Allen (2017). Specifically, cultural generativity, addresses the passing on of particular values, traditions and forms of knowledge directly linked to a specific cultural worldview to future generations (Kotre, 2004). While indigenous cultural generativity emphasizes the need and importance of preserving the history, language, values, culture and the specific community of the original peoples, it also emphasizes the need to preserve the cultural and cultural heritage of the indigenous peoples.

### **Generative Manifestations in the Mapuche People**

From the Mapuche perspective, the transmission of knowledge is entrusted to the *kimches* (authorities and bearers of traditional knowledge) (Quilaqueo & Quintriqueo, 2010) and to the other adults of the *lof*

(basic form of social organization): the *reñma* (extended family), the *küpan* (family of origin) and the *fütakeche* (elders), the latter being those who have experienced and acquired knowledge and wisdom over the years, and are therefore highly valued within the culture as active subjects with relevant leadership roles (SENAMA, 2015). In other words, they are those who primarily assume a generative role in Mapuche culture, since they are responsible for transmitting knowledge through the generative principles: “*kümeyawael* (to be a person of good behavior), *yamüwael* (to be a person who esteems the family and the community), *küme che geael* (to be a good person) and *kim che geel* (to be a wise person)” (Quilaqueo & Quintriqueo, 2017 p. 350). This cultural transmission and Mapuche knowledge have been in constant tension due to the cultural and territorial appropriation of other forms of government, education and way of life external to the cosmivision of this people.

### **Characterization of Mapuche Education**

In the Mapuche context, educational processes are constructed dialogically in the family and community environment, based on a cultural logic that has its own frame of reference to contribute to the development of new generations (Quintriqueo & Arias, 2019). However, this perspective contrasts with the current structure of the Chilean educational model, which with its western, hegemonic and monocultural logic has historically hierarchized as inferior the knowledge, wisdom and practices of the native peoples, which has led to a progressive loss of ancestral wisdom and created an urgency to promote dialogues between Mapuche knowledge-acting and schooling processes (Solano, 2015).

Mapuche ancestral education is based on learning by doing, observing reality, expressing knowledge and wisdom in *Mapudungun* (spoken language), experiencing *inatuzugun* (Mapuche way of knowing) and using *gülam* (type of formative conversation among young people) for the transmission of customs and values, while rescuing traditional knowledge in the educational context (Arias, 2019). In this sense, teaching is a task that far transcends school logic. In other words, Mapuche education is based on *kimeltuwün* (Quilaqueo et al, 2016), an essentially formative and socialization action in which both family (*küpan*) and territorial (*tuwün*) ancestry and the work of the principles *kümeyawael* (to be a person of good behavior), *yamüwael* (to be a person who esteems the family and community), *küme che geael* (to be a good person), and *kim che geel* (to be a wise person) are found. (Quilaqueo et al, 2016; Quilaqueo & Quintriqueo, 2017).

Another category is procedural, known as *zapin*, which refers to the teaching of attitudes to cultivate knowledge; *inatuzugu*, understood as the search in family roots for the Mapuche being or *az* (features) of the person; and *gülam*, a strategy used to teach values and attitudes regarding social knowledge, nature, artistic-technological creation and the spiritual-symbolic (Quilaqueo et al., 2005). Thus, the *Küme Mogen* (good living) assumes a relevant role.

This construct is observed transversally in Mapuche education, since it represents a shared cosmivision to think about another reality in which human beings are part of a more harmonious whole with nature, with other humans and with the otherness that enriches everyday life, recognizing the diversity of values and mutual respect for all beings that make up this common home (De la Cuadra, 2015). From this perspective, the process of awareness and involvement of people and communities is enhanced (Sandoval-Obando, Serra & Zacarés, 2019) through the participation of the family, the community and the beings that surround us (Aguado et al., 2016), admitting the emergence of potentially generative practices that recognize the ancestral knowledge, wisdom and ways of life of the territory (Aguado et al., 2016).

### **The Chilean Rural School**

Rural education in Chile represents 29.2% of the total number of establishments in the country, according to the Ministry of Education (2021). This offer shows several particularities, such as, multiple roles of teachers and managers, attention to diversity of realities and several grades in the same classroom (Arriagada, 2018); representing a highly heterogeneous social and community space where community meeting and support activities take place (Fuentes, 2019).

However, in Chile there is little evidence of the promotion of rural education in public policies, which is paradoxical considering that, in 2021, teachers in rural contexts accounted for 11.8% of teachers in the country (Center of Studies - Ministry of Education, 2021). For its part, the enrollment report of the Ministry

of Education in 2021 points out that more than 277,844 students attend these educational centers, many of whom face various economic deprivations (Arriagada, 2018).

Given this scenario, it is necessary to strengthen the work of teachers in these territories, achieving a relevant and culturally situated university preparation (Díaz, 2016), enabling the deployment of potentially generative pedagogical strategies that recognize and integrate the values and traditions of the rural community where they practice their profession (Sandoval-Obando, 2019; Zacarés & Serra, 2011). It is about strengthening the transcendence of ancestral knowledge, the historical legacy, and the sense of belonging to the community (Lewis & Allen, 2017).

## **METHOD**

### **Design of the Study**

The research was carried out from a qualitative interpretative approach, following an exploratory-descriptive and cross-sectional design.

### **Participants**

A non-probabilistic convenience sampling was used, since the participants were selected according to the particular characteristics defined for the development of this research. Therefore, the participants were 4 educators, who have worked regularly in intercultural schools located within the commune of Toltén (Chile), have an average age of 50 years, and culturally self-identify with the Mapuche ethnic group.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

In-depth interviews were used from the narrative-generative perspective (Brady et al, 2013; McAdams & Guo, 2015; McAdams & McLean, 2013; Sandoval-Obando, 2022a). Complementarily, we resorted to the *Nütram*, a Mapuche mode of conversation to transmit teachings, experiences and knowledge from the life stories or narratives of the speakers (Llamin, 2015).

Each meeting was conducted in two phases: First, it sought to build trust and closeness between the *kimeltuchefe* and the interviewer, where non-invasive questions were developed. Meanwhile, in the second phase, the body of the interview was developed, exploring the following topics: rural schooling, ancestral knowledge, generative potential of the teaching profession, and life experiences that influenced the construction of the professionalism of rural teachers in *Lafkenche* territory and its generative potential.

### **Data Analysis Strategy**

For the analysis and organization of the records obtained, we resorted to content analysis under the logic of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 2002). Procedurally, we proceeded to the textual transcription of the data, then we began the process of coding the transcribed information (Strauss & Corbin, 2002) through three stages (Bonilla & López, 2016 p. 308): open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. A constant analysis of the results was maintained through description and interpretation, counting and concurrence of codes, theoretical and empirical comparison of the content (Rodriguez et al., 2005).

### **Ethical and Scientific Rigor Criteria**

The research protocol was constructed in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and taking as a reference the guidelines established by the Scientific Ethics Committee for work with human beings of the University of La Frontera (Chile).

## **RESULTS**

As part of the process of analysis and interpretation of the data collected (Rodriguez et al, 2005), ten categories emerged around which the presentation of results was structured:

- a) Life Trajectories of *kimeltuchefe*: Set of significant life experiences, positive and / or negative that developed in the course of the life cycle of the *kimeltuchefe* interviewed, which together

led to the development of a potentially generative teaching identity. It was made up of the following codes: redemptive identity, significant experiences childhood - adolescence, religious and spiritual influences, turning points of the rural teacher.

- b) *Folil* vocational *kimeltuchefe*: *Folil* (roots) and *kimeltuchefe*, (person who teaches): refers to the set of people, entities or situations that prompted the / those interviewed to be professionally trained as teachers and assume the role of *kimeltuchefe*, showing professional and personal models that aroused interest in working in *Lafkenche* territory. It consisted of the following codes: Incidental vocation of teachers, teaching vocation influenced by friends, educational influence - Family, significant mentors of teachers, teachers vocational models.
- c) *Kimeltuchefe's* lifestyle: refers to the behavioral traits, lifestyle, hobbies, ethical and moral standards that guide the work of teachers inside and outside the educational context. It is made up of the following dimensions: Experiential self-criticism, Teacher mobility, Inclusion and educational diversity, Use of free time, Cardinal values.
- d) Challenges of teaching in the *Lafkenche* territory: demands and challenges experienced by teachers in the Mapuche territory; related to the management and administration of schools, knowledge and ignorance of the Mapuche *kimiün* and other aspects that arise in the teaching task. This is expressed in the following codes: precariousness in rural education, Deconstruction of the pedagogical task, Responsibilities outside the teaching role, Contextualized education, Emerging ignorance of the professional teaching task, Ignorance of the Mapuche *kimiün*.
- e) *Newen* (force or energy) *Kimeltuchefe*: Ideals that give trajectory and motives to teachers to exercise and maintain teaching in the *lof*. It has two codes: social awareness, School and community in the *piwke*.
- f) Relationship between the *Kimeltuchefe* - *Lof*: Links and types of relationship generated between the teacher and *lof* of Agustin Millao as a result of his educational role in the Mapuche community, showing types of unilateral and bilateral relationships between them. We highlight the following codes and areas of analysis: Admiration towards the Mapuche *kimiüm*, Desire for 'Mapuchization', School as a community space, Cultural clash, Intercultural relationship, Multicultural relationship, Teacher's evaluative perception.
- g) *Kimeltuchefe* and its educational purposes in *Lafkenche* territory: set of personal and/or community objectives that rural teachers imprint on their educational work, inside and outside the classroom, promoting a marked generative and cultural interest. It has four codes: Promotion of the Mapuche sense of belonging, Teaching of community ideology (*lof*), Decolonization of knowledge, Intercultural teaching, and Intercultural education.
- h) *Kimeltuchefe* and its generative potential: Manifestations of the teachers interviewed that denote an interest in favoring and contributing to the development of future generations. It has three codes: Teachers as generational link, desire and generative responsibility, generative potential values.
- i) *Mapuche Kimiün* and teaching: set of networking and sharing that takes place between Mapuche culture and traditional schooling processes, making possible the recognition of different ceremonies, myths, stories, games, forms of relationship, teaching methods and others, typical of Mapuche ancestral wisdom within the daily practice of rural education. It is made up of the following dimensions: *Epew*, Dialogue in education, *Mapuzungun* and *kimeltuwe ruka*, *Küme Mogen*, Learning by doing, *Aukantun*, Mapuche practices and ceremonies in school context, Ancestral authorities in school context.
- j) Generative responsibility of the Mapuche *kimiün*: Assignment of roles, tasks and functions associated with the transmission of Mapuche ancestral knowledge in the community, according to the type of group, such as the *lof* (community), *kimeltuchefe ruka* (school), *reñma* (extended family), *fucha and kuche* (elders), ancestral authorities and other community factors. Three codes stand out: Generative *lof*, Generativity - *kimeltuwe ruka*, Generative responsibility of *Reñma*.

Specifically, in order to contextualize and qualitatively deepen the resulting analyses of the categories and their various relationships, the following results stand out:

#### *Life Trajectories of Kimeltuchefe*

Participants witnessed different significant experiences during the course of their lives that helped develop their generative identity through self-learning of *kimeltuchefe* through all the experiences lived. Moreover, the negative life experiences were conducive to obtaining different lessons and learning for the future of their lives (redemptive identity):

“[...] *I have many stories (laughs). But I always get positive things out of the negative stories*” (EK 2, 2020).

Also, the *kimeltuchefe* witnessed different significant experiences during their childhood, particularly some critical events related to complex political situations in Chile during the military government, which left a mark in their memory:

“[...] *At night, the military arrived and took all the men out of the houses, my father was sleeping in his underwear, with a gun and everything, they took him away, we were all crying.*” (EK 1, 2020).

On the other hand, the relationship with their family of origin during the interviewees' childhood and youth was characterized by a positive and secure attachment with their immediate family. Similarly, the early links with social, cultural and/or spiritual groups had in common their orientation of helping others and their interest in helping others. Their closeness to the spiritual was also evident during the course of their lives, entrusting their work, experiences and especially their difficulties to the help of a god who protected them.

#### *Folil Vocational Kimeltuchefe*

Regarding the process of building the *kimeltuchefe* vocation of the participants, the influence of different actors such as family, friends, neighbors and tutors was observed in the decision to contribute and work in the field of rural education in Mapuche territory. Some of the participants highlighted the teachers who had during their basic or university studies, those who sowed a greater affection for the work and commitment to rural communities located in indigenous territory:

“[...] *A sensational boss, I had a woman who taught me what it was to educate and what it was to teach, everything I am I owe to her. She was a spectacular woman, she was a woman who I felt that she left her life at school*” (EK 3, 2020).

In other cases, the teaching vocation developed intuitively, since the teaching job was an option they did not contemplate in their lives, but it came fortuitously when they felt the need to practice the profession:

“[...] *So when I was given the opportunity I took it, but it wasn't something that I said: 'I want to be a teacher all my life' no, I was related to the medical part*” (EK 4, 2020).

#### *Kimeltuchefe Lifestyle*

Frustration in the face of unfulfilled achievements, or failure to act in the face of decisions considered unfair by managers and/or co-workers, are aspects that the *kimeltuchefe* still remember and would like not to live these situations again in the future, longing for the construction of work environments that enhance the welfare of their students:

*“[...] It may be that suddenly one omits many things, because sometimes because of hierarchy or many things like that one does not have much power to make decisions, to act... so I think that could be my regret, that I could not have been a little more...brave. [...] Although I tried to be, but I wasn't...” (EK 4, 2020).*

Educational flexibility, awareness of different ways of learning and creativity in teaching were also factors present in the narratives of the interviewees, describing different experiences in the school environment where they observed infrastructure deficiencies and/or accessibility problems for some of their students for reasons such as functional, sensory, cognitive or cultural diversity. This caused discomfort with the omission of some of their peers to implement strategies that would provide accessibility of educational content to their students who had this type of adaptation difficulties in their home contexts.

On the other hand, the participants expressed different values that guided their professional work in the Mapuche rurality, represented in the Mapuche *Kimün*, manifested in the interaction of the person with his community and his environment (people, nature and spiritual beings). These values were: peace, understood as the desire to maintain healthy coexistence and good treatment of students, justice, highlighting the importance of knowing how to act and the need to think about the future consequences of one's own actions, which should not negatively influence the lives of others, relating to the value of reciprocity, love (dedication to others, to nature and to everything that surrounds them).

Therefore, it could be inferred that for the *kimeltuchefe* there are some values that are key to educational action, such as respect and love. However, these are represented as a whole:

*“[...] Well, for me everything is born from respect, love, surrender. Respect is the only thing that keeps us alive here on earth, if there is no earth there is no... There is nothing! [...] I see it that way, as a delivery of knowledge, of knowledge, of love, I don't know! I couldn't define in one word what I think, but for me, it's everything, that is; nothing works if you don't work, this doesn't work, it has to be... everything!” (EK 3, 2020).*

In addition to the above, the characteristic features of the *kimeltuchefe* give a primary value to the family and to nature inside and outside the classroom:

*“[...] So I also have contact with nature and I have a husband who has a very well-groomed land. He...I don't know po, he lives, he vibrates touching the earth, working the earth, it makes him feel young, alive and revitalizes him, just like me, po” (EK 3, 2020).*

#### *Challenges of Teaching in Lafkenche Territory*

The participants expressed various challenges that must be addressed in the Mapuche territory, starting with difficulties of budgetary inequality, technological access, overloading of the educational staff and aspects of the *Lafkenche* context. Among these was the need to create a contextualized education that responds to the needs of the Mapuche community and lifestyle:

*“[...]One has to know the environment, the context and the family. You have to know that what my family lives is not the same as what my children's family lives, so you have to know and put yourself in their shoes too, and I think that is very important” (EK 2, 2020).*

In addition, much of the knowledge and skills to develop as a rural teacher in Mapuche territory are found in practice, that is, experiential learning becomes the main source of knowledge for teachers. However, the lack of knowledge of *Mapuche-Kimiün* on the part of teachers who have no roots or contact with Mapuche culture during their lives requires constant interaction with the community in order to understand and develop within the cultural norms located in the territory.

At the same time, the *kimeltuchefe* participate in different community roles, outside their teaching role, taking charge of responsibilities assigned to other trades, requiring extra commitment and dedication to achieve their work in the academic context and the objectives established as a person:

*“[...] I am the one who sometimes has to go out during classes and I cannot leave the children alone because I do not have an assistant to take care of them, or I do have an assistant, but he has a schedule that does not coincide with mine. Therefore, that’s why I call them my chicks, because I grab them all and go out with them somewhere else...” (EK 1, 2020).*

As a result of this proximity, the creation of ties between the *kimeltuchefe* and the community is observed, differentiating between the formation of multicultural and intercultural relationships. The first refers to the interaction that is limited to the teaching role in school context, in which the teacher is aware and respects the presence of the Mapuche culture in the classroom, but does not interact deeply with the community, beliefs and / or customs of the territory. The second refers to the educator who seeks respectful interaction and cultural recognition of the Mapuche community for the development of their classes, as well as participation in activities and cultural spaces that transcend the boundaries of the school. However, regardless of the type of relationship established between *kimeltuchefe* and community, the interviewees showed interest and respect for the *Mapuche-kimiün* (Mapuche epistemology), desire to participate and to know it in greater depth:

*“[...] I would like to feel a little more inserted in the community or with more roots, or with more contribution, being a contribution to the community” (EK 1, 2020).*

#### *Kimeltuchefe and Its Educational Purposes in Lafkenche Territory*

Different purposes and potentially generative interests were evidenced by the *kimeltuchefe*, developing tasks or responsibilities that contribute to the community and the Mapuche identity formation of children. Among them, the interviewees expressed the “decolonization of knowledge” as one of the purposes established by the *kimeltuchefe*, which aims at the revaluation of ancestral knowledge that has been lost since western colonization to the present; sowing in the students the benefits that brings the practice of Mapuche ancestral wisdom, rescuing the pride and admiration of their students to the cultural roots of the *Lafkenche* community.:

*“[...] To make the child feel proud, proud because not everyone has the possibility of what they have, of living life, of valuing the land as the Mapuche, the indigenous people, value it. [...] One’s work is great because from a very young age we make them feel proud of being Mapuche, of preserving their roots, of identifying themselves more than anything else” (Interview kimeltuchefe 3, 2020).*

On the other hand, the generative potential that the *kimeltuchefe* have within their teaching role allows them to transmit something practical for the students and to transcend a personal identity formation through the teaching of values and community service:

*“[...] My great challenge is to form good people who have values and who serve society and, above all, their community. Do you notice?” (EK 3, 2020).*

Likewise, the role of teachers in *Lafkenche* territory transcends the fact of transmitting information to the next generation, so they also promote the ancestral knowledge and historical events of the Mapuche community, showing the need to transcend cultural information and local customs:



“[...] Besides delivering content, it also has to deliver this information that has been passed on from generation to generation, there are no writings and everything has been said in words... For example, the history of the past was very different from the history we know today, because there was a time when that was hidden, and from then on, things have been appearing. That has to be taught to the children” (EK 2, 2020).

### *Mapuche Kimiün and the Teaching Profession*

The *Mapuche-kimiün* has permeabilized the traditional structure of the rural school context, favoring the integration of different knowledge and teaching methods from the Mapuche culture for their classes. The use of *Mapudungun* and learning by doing are methods that emerged in the analysis of the narratives, teaching the Mapuche culture to their students through the link with family members and community (*Inatuzugu*), as well as the importance of dialogue among students to find solutions to different problems or situations of the class (*Güxam*). Use is made of *aukantun* (traditional games) and Epew, narratives or stories that in their content transmit the knowledge of the *Mapuche Kimiün*. One of the ancestral knowledge most present and promoted by the *kimeltuchefe* was the *Küme Mogen*, promoting in the students the knowledge of nature through a relationship of respect, care and promotion of lifestyles in harmony with the environment around them:

“[...] Sometimes I ask the children, “Let’s see how the land is planted, what the grandparents do, how they speak...it’s the language...Already? for me that’s ancestral knowledge” (EK 4, 2020).

In connection with the above, the interviewees are aware of their generative responsibility for the preservation of Mapuche ancestral knowledge, visualizing the school as an ideal space and time for the teaching of *Mapuche-kimiün*. That is, they highlighted the importance of working together with the lof, where they are more involved in school activities, recognizing the generative implications of the *reñma* (family), *Fütakeche* (grandparents), *kimeltuwe* (school), traditional authorities and lof in general, to transmit and teach Mapuche culture and knowledge to future generations.

## **DISCUSSION**

First, when delving into the relational dynamics constructed by rural Mapuche teachers, it was observed that the findings obtained are consistent with the current literature, showing that the formation of generative identity is built from reflection and continuous learning about the experiences accumulated throughout their life trajectories (McAdams & Guo, 2015; Sandoval-Obando & Calvo Muñoz, 2022b), highlighting among them, secure family relationships in childhood (An & Cooney, 2006; Brady et al, 2013), participation in peer support groups in youth, and the influence of peer groups with whom they share prosocial values (An & Cooney, 2006; Brady et al., 2013). In addition, some aspects of the teachers’ lifestyle were highlighted that were related to potentially generative characteristics, such as positively signifying past mistakes, investing time with the family (Brady et al, 2013), early linkage with rurality and active life at the socio-community level (Sandoval-Obando, 2019; Sandoval-Obando et al., 2022); aspects that are also influenced and coherent with the *Mapuche-kimiün*. The values that govern the lives of teachers are an important factor in Mapuche generativity and life, highlighting justice, respect and love in their professional work as cardinal values that connect dialogically with the *Mapuche-kimün*, the *yamuwün* and the *azmawün*, dimensions that, as a whole, strengthen community life and the connection with the territory (Ñanculef, 2016).

Secondly, the teachers interviewed expressed the development of a contextualized education that values and integrates the historical-cultural particularities of the territory, opposing the homogenizing schooling (Winter & Hernández, 2004) that responds to the ‘Chilean development of rurality’ (Oyarzún et al., 2022). Therefore, they promote the deconstruction of traditional pedagogical knowledge, through the acquisition of cultural skills suitable for working in the *Lafkenche* territory. However, they are aware of the gap left by university training to work in a Mapuche community (Brumat, 2011), together with the difficulty generated

by the lack of knowledge of *Mapuche-kimun* and ancestral customs. As in most rural schools, the teaching role requires going beyond the logic of schooling to become actively involved with the community, so that their professional work goes far beyond the limits defined by school space and time (Sandoval-Obando, 2021a), and at the same time, allows them to cultivate different types of relationships (intercellular and multicultural) with the *Lafkenche* community.

Despite the above, teachers expressed a generative responsibility that mobilizes them to face this reality in an optimistic way, tending to the development of relevant educational learning for the new generations (Sandoval-Obando, 2022b). To this end, they encourage a sense of belonging in the student body, decolonizing school contents and advancing in the configuration of an intercultural society (Figueroa, 2015).

Thirdly, it was observed in the educational practice of the interviewees the use of various Mapuche knowledge and customs, such as: *Inatzugu, gülam and epew* (ways of learning by doing), the use of *Mapudungun* (language of the land, Mapuche language), ceremonial practices, *epew* (stories), *ankantun* (games) and the teaching of *Kiimen mogen*, the latter being the basis for teaching a new way of relating to the Mapuche cosmovision. This generative desire, added to the solid bond created between the teacher, the students and the community, strengthens the newer *kimeltuchefe* (teaching force). This is expressed synergistically on the basis of deep admiration for the *Mapuche-kimun* and the creation of a genuine emotional bond with the practices and customs present in the community.

In addition, the teachers interviewed manifest characteristics consistent with ancestral generativity or indigenous generativity, described by Lewis & Allen (2017), which is complemented by the wisdom contributed by the *kuche and fucha* (elders), *reñma* (family), *lomko, kimches* and the *lof* in general, reaffirming the idea that Mapuche generativity and community work is key in the transmission of ancestral knowledge and the preservation of culture in future generations (Ñanculef, 2016). Therefore, it would be possible to affirm that the generative potential of rural teachers in Mapuche territory can be used to address different cultural issues, and at the same time, it would strengthen the construction of intercultural education.

Fourthly, this work provides emerging pedagogical and cultural elements around the study of generativity in rural teachers working in a Mapuche *Lafkenche* community in the Araucanía Region (Chile), many of which can enrich the initial training of teachers and reaffirm the importance of knowing in depth the diverse realities existing in rural Chile (Carter-Thuillier et al., 2022), thus reducing the existing gap between teacher training institutions and the school system (Gaete, Gómez & Bascope, 2016).

Finally, this study has some methodological limitations, mainly related to the design of the study (so its results are only attributable to the participants and cannot be extrapolated to other groups or populations) and the sample size (limited number of participants who met the selection criteria defined for the nature of this research). On the other hand, the limits of traditional scientific research and the complexities associated with the written translation of the '*Mapuche-kimun*' are made explicit, since this is a culture of preferably oral tradition. Precisely for this reason, readers are invited not to limit themselves to written bibliographies or to what exists in traditional databases, and to learn about the reality of the Mapuche communities and rural territory from their reality, through dialogue with the inhabitants of the Wallmapu, since this is a knowledge that only the present experience can provide and contribute to the intercultural learning that is so desired in Chile.

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